



To the Honorable Council
City of Norfolk, Virginia

January 26, 2015

From: George M. Homewood, AICP, CFM, Planning Director

Subject: To modify Appendix B in the Table of Contents within *plaNorfolk2030* to add the *Complete Street Policy* and to modify an action in the Transportation chapter pertaining to Complete Streets

Reviewed:

Ronald H. Williams, Jr., Deputy City Manager

Ward/Superward: Citywide

Approved:

Marcus D. Jones, City Manager

Item Number:

PH-4


- I. **Staff Recommendation:** Approval.
- II. **Commission Action:** By a vote of **6 to 0**, the Planning Commission recommends **Approval as modified at the public hearing.**
- III. **Request:** To adopt the *Complete Streets Policy*
- IV. **Applicant:** City Planning Commission
- V. **Description:**
 - *plaNorfolk2030* calls for the development of Complete Streets that include provisions for all users.
 - The City needs additional policy guidance to fully implement Complete Streets aimed at developing a more comprehensive, integrated and connected transportation network that offers a wide variety of choices.
 - Utilizing best practices as outlined by Smart Growth America and other national resources, staff developed a Complete Streets Policy to be adopted by reference into *plaNorfolk2030*.
 - Based on suggestions provided by DNC at the public hearing, the Planning Commission modified the policy to strengthen its applicability and clarify the metrics.

Staff point of contact: Paula Shea at 664-4772, paula.shea@norfolk.gov

Attachments:

- Staff Report to CPC dated December 10, 2015 with attachments
- Letter of support – Downtown Norfolk Council
- Proponents and Opponents
- Ordinance

Planning Commission Public Hearing: December 10, 2015

Executive Secretary: George M. Homewood, AICP, CFM 

Staff: Paula M. Shea, AICP (PS)

Staff Report		Item No. 2
Applicant	City Planning Commission	
Request	Text Amendment	To modify Appendix B in the Table of Contents within <i>plaNorfolk2030</i> to add the <i>Complete Streets Policy</i> and to modify an action in the Transportation chapter pertaining to Complete Streets.

A. Summary of Request

- *plaNorfolk2030* calls for the development of Complete Streets that include provisions for all users.
- The City needs additional policy guidance to fully implement Complete Streets aimed at developing a more comprehensive, integrated and connected transportation network that offers a wide variety of choices.
- Utilizing best practices as outlined by Smart Growth America and other national resources, staff developed a *Complete Streets Policy* to be adopted by reference into *plaNorfolk2030*.

B. Plan Consistency

The *Complete Streets Policy* is an important implementation step in *plaNorfolk2030* and is consistent with the plan.

C. Financial Impact

- There will be additional costs to the City when adding infrastructure to streets, such as sidewalks, bike facilities, and other elements.
- There are opportunities to seek additional funding through grants and other sources to help fund improvements.
- There is evidence that the addition of Complete Streets elements, particularly in the form of bike facilities and other transportation options, actually increases public revenues in the form of real estate and sales tax.

D. Traffic Impact

One of the goals of Complete Streets is to increase transportation options and improve general mobility, thus making Norfolk more livable for more citizens.

E. Impact on the Environment

- Not only do Complete Streets offer the chance to introduce green infrastructure, they could lead to reduced fuel consumption and reduced demand for motor vehicle infrastructure.
- Complete Streets also allow for the addition of sustainable stormwater management strategies in street infrastructure.

F. Communication Outreach/Notification

- Legal notification was placed in *The Virginian-Pilot* on November 26 and December 3.
- This policy has been coordinated with the Department of Public Works.

G. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the amendment to *plaNorfolk2030* request be **approved**.

Attachments:

Complete Streets Policy

Proposed text and implementation table

Proponents and Opponents

Proponents

Mary Miller
7600 Gleneagles Road
Norfolk, VA 23505

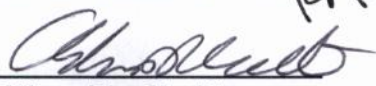
Gregory Reck
219 Granby Street, Unit 30
Norfolk, VA 23510

Opponents

None

Form and Correctness Approved: 

Contents Approved: 

By 
Office of the City Attorney

By 
DEPT.

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

ORDINANCE No.

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CITY'S GENERAL PLAN, PLANORFOLK2030, SO AS TO ADOPT A "COMPLETE STREET POLICY" AND TO MODIFY ACTIONS TO SUPPORT THE POLICY.

- - -

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Norfolk:

Section 1: That the "Complete Streets Policy" is hereby adopted and made part of the general plan of Norfolk, plaNorfolk2030. The Policy shall read as set forth in "Exhibit A," attached hereto.

Section 2: and the general plan is hereby amended so as to incorporate said Complete Streets Policy and to modify certain actions in plaNorfolk2030 as follows:

- (a) Modify the Table of Contents to change "Appendix B" to read as follows:

Appendix B. Plans, Policies and Supplements

*City of Norfolk Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area
Program Supplement*

*City of Norfolk Bicycle and Pedestrian Strategic
Plan*

Complete Streets Policy

- (b) In Chapter 4, Goal 1, modify Action T1.3.1 so that it reads as set forth in "Exhibit B," attached hereto.
- (c) In Chapter 13, "Implementing plaNorfolk2030," amend the row and all information contained in the row related to the amendments and adjustments indicated above, as set forth in "Exhibit C," attached hereto.

Section 3:- The Council hereby finds that this general plan amendment is required by public necessity, convenience, general welfare, or good zoning practice.

Section 4:- That this ordinance shall be in effect from the

date of its adoption.

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit A (3 pages)

Exhibit B (1 page)

Exhibit C (1 page)

Exhibit A

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Definition

Complete Streets are streets that are designed—or redesigned—and operated to allow safe access to all people, regardless of age, ability, income, ethnicity, or chosen mode of travel, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders.

Purpose and Need

The adoption of a Complete Streets policy will facilitate the following:

- Develop a more comprehensive, integrated and connected transportation network that offers a wide variety of choices, as outlined in the City's comprehensive plan, *plaNorfolk2030*;
- Improve safety for all users of transportation;
- Embrace streets as public spaces promoting placemaking and creating a sense of community;
- Improve aesthetics of streets by designing them as a whole, from building face to building face, not just pavement;
- Stimulate the local economy by spurring private investment and raising property values by giving people options to commute and improving aesthetics;
- Promote better health through more options for healthy lifestyles that include walking and bicycling;
- Combine transportation choice with environmental strategies, increasing opportunities for environmental stewardship through the addition of green infrastructure, reduction of fuel consumption and reduced demand for motor vehicle infrastructure;
- Incorporate sustainable stormwater management strategies in street infrastructure; and
- Optimize the effectiveness of the transportation network by maximizing the number of transportation options available within the public right-of-way.

Policy

Norfolk shall develop, operate and maintain an integrated, connected network of streets that are safe and accessible for all people, regardless of age, ability, income, ethnicity, or chosen mode of travel, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders, in a balanced, responsible and equitable manner consistent with and supportive of the surrounding community.

Norfolk shall incorporate Complete Streets infrastructure in keeping with surrounding uses and sufficient to enable reasonably safe travel along and across the right-of-way. Every street in Norfolk shall strive to have:

- Sidewalks
- An area (verge or splash area) separating sidewalks from road lanes, as well as other innovative approaches to address environmental stewardship and stormwater management
- Safe pedestrian crossings and intersections that accommodate all users

- Vehicle and bicycle parking accommodations appropriate to both serve adjacent land uses and as traffic calming
- Bike facilities or identified reasonable alternatives, such as a parallel street with facilities
- Transit accommodations where part of transit routes
- Travel lanes appropriate to serve the adjacent land uses and the overall function of the road

Scope

The Norfolk Complete Streets Policy shall apply to all phases of design, planning, construction, maintenance, and operations of all transportation projects within the City by public or private entities including:

- New construction of streets or street segments
- Reconstruction of streets or street segments, including utility upgrades and resurfacing projects

Where projects involve other jurisdictions or other transportation agencies, Norfolk will work with those jurisdictions or agencies to implement this policy.

Exceptions

Any exception to this policy will be considered by the Director of Public Works and the Director of City Planning. Any exceptions granted will be documented with supporting data that indicates the basis for the decision. Such documentation shall be publicly available.

Circumstances for exceptions may include:

- Emergency repairs. However, all existing Complete Streets infrastructure will remain or be replaced in the instance of emergency repair.
- Affected transportation facility prohibits, by law, use by specified users (such as an interstate freeways or pedestrian malls)
- Cost would be excessively disproportionate to the need or probable future use
- Inclusion of such infrastructure would be contrary to public safety
- Environmental or social impacts outweigh the need for these accommodations

Design Guidelines

Norfolk shall follow accepted or adopted design guidelines, using the best and latest design guidelines available. These guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Bike and Urban Street Design Guides;
- International Transportation Engineers (ITE) "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach";
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guides;
- US Access Board Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) ; and
- FHWA Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide

In recognition of context sensitivity and the need to introduce Complete Street infrastructure into an already built environment, Norfolk shall consider both the Character District (as outlined in *planNorfolk2030*) and the street type in implementing a flexible, innovative and balanced approach that follows appropriate design guidelines and provides a comparable level of safety for all users.

Implementation

Norfolk shall incorporate Complete Streets into City decision-making processes with the following actions:

- **Plans, Manuals, etc.** The Department of Public Works, the Department of City Planning and other relevant departments shall incorporate Complete Streets principles into all plans, manuals, checklists, decision-trees, rules, regulations, and programs as appropriate
- **Street Design Guidelines.** The Department of Public Works shall create Street Design Guidelines, incorporating Character District and appropriate street network typologies as decision making components for Complete Streets infrastructure
- **Asset Inventory.** The Department of Public Works shall develop and maintain an inventory of sidewalks, street lanes and widths, bicycle facilities and crosswalks
- **Multi-Disciplinary Design Team.** The City shall utilize a multi-disciplinary design team to:
 - Coordinate the implementation of the complete street policy
 - Collaboratively approach each street design decision process
 - Promote the most responsible and efficient use of fiscal resources for activities that occur within the public right-of-way
 - Identify Complete Street opportunities
- **Funding.** The City shall actively seek funds necessary for improvements in the right-of-way in support of this policy
- **Training.** The City shall train pertinent staff in the engineering, parks and recreation, planning, and transportation on the content of the Complete Street principles
- **Additional Opportunities.** The City shall develop a process to involve the private sector in implementing complete streets infrastructure.

Performance Measures and Reporting

Norfolk shall measure the success of this Complete Streets policy using, but not limited to, the following performance measures:

- Total miles of new bike lanes or sharrows
- Total number of new bike racks installed, both public and private
- Total linear feet of new pedestrian sidewalk accommodation
- Total number of new curb ramps installed along city streets
- Total number of new pedestrian countdown signals installed

An annual report will be made to the City Council showing progress made in implementing this policy. This report will also be posted online for each of the above measures.

Exhibit B

Action T1.3.1. Implement the Complete Streets Policy (Appendix B) in order to develop, operate and maintain an integrated, connected network of streets that are safe and accessible for all people or chosen mode of travel, in a balanced, responsible and equitable manner consistent with and supportive of the surrounding community. ~~Support the development of "complete streets" that include provisions for bicycles and pedestrians, as well as cars and transit, in improvement projects along designated road segments (see Map T-7).~~

Comments: Complete streets are designed and operated to provide safe access for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit users of all ages and abilities both along and across the corridor. For example, bicycles can be accommodated through shared lanes (sharrows), dedicated lanes, or separate multi-use paths in a complete street.

Exhibit C

Table IP-1. Implementation Matrix

IMPLEMENTATION ITEM	ACTION	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETION	COST CATEGORY	COMMENTS
Transportation Goal 1. Connect residents and visitors with business, employment, shopping, educational, and activity centers through a safe and efficient multi-modal regional transportation system.					
Outcome T1.3. An expanded pedestrian and bicycle network that promotes improved public health and provides opportunities for alternative forms of transportation.	T1.3.1	Implement the Complete Streets Policy (Appendix B) in order to develop, operate and maintain an integrated, connected network of streets that are safe and accessible for all people or chosen mode of travel, in a balanced, responsible and equitable manner consistent with and supportive of the surrounding community.	Planning; PW	Ongoing	Several Million

Downtown Norfolk

COUNCIL

December 10, 2015

George Homewood, AICP
Director
Department of Planning
City of Norfolk
810 Union Street, 5th Floor
Norfolk, VA 23510

Dear George,


On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Downtown Norfolk Council (DNC), I wish to convey to the Norfolk Planning Commission the support of the DNC for the draft Complete Streets Policy scheduled for presentation to the commission by the Department of Planning. The DNC believes that the concepts embodied in Complete Streets (CS) are vital elements of a progressive community and that the draft CS policy will provide the basis and structure for a transition to Complete Streets in Norfolk.

The Downtown Norfolk Council established a Complete Streets Committee in 2012 and that committee has advocated CS policies and practices for Norfolk since then. The CS committee has supported the DNC sharrow program for Granby St. and jointly funded the bike rack program with the city that placed bike racks throughout the downtown district.

We have examined the draft CS policy from the perspective of the 10 elements recommended by the Smart Growth America/National Complete Streets Coalition as critical elements in successful CS policies. The Norfolk draft policy addresses all of the central elements recommended by the CS coalition. But we have identified in the attachment several elements in the Norfolk draft policy that we believe should be strengthened and we provide suggested changes.

While we support the intent and the general content of the draft CS Policy, we are concerned that the policy will be fully embraced by all of the city departments that play important roles in implementing the policy. In addition, the Multi-Disciplinary Design Team described in the policy is crucial to the successful implementation of the policy, and the Team leader should be the primary advocate for Complete Streets. We believe that the structure and composition of this team must be identified in the policy.

Very Truly yours,


Mary B. Miller
President & CEO

Attachment: Specific Elements that should be strengthened, modified or clarified

Specific Elements of the draft Complete Streets Policy that should be strengthened, modified, or clarified:

1. In the second paragraph of the Policy section, the statement that "Norfolk shall incorporate" is very positive, but the phrase "to the extent possible" equivocates the resolve. The Exceptions section identifies specific instances when CS does not apply and the Multi-Disciplinary Design Team will identify the "most responsible and efficient use of fiscal resources". Also, delete "reasonably" from the safe travel comment.

Also, in the Policy section, revise the 4th bullet to "Vehicle and bike parking accommodations . . ."

Also, in the Policy section, an example of an "identified reasonable alternative" to bike facilities would be helpful.

2. In the Exceptions section, "Emergency repairs" is an unusual inclusion. It is reasonable that an emergency repair would not be considered a candidate for new complete streets facilities, but it is also reasonable that any pre-existing CS facilities be replaced after the repairs are completed.

Also in the Exceptions section, delete the exception for infrastructure that would be "contrary to public safety", as it would be contrary to the CS policy.

Also in the Exceptions section, many "severe topographical constraints" would be cost prohibitive, but there may be other considerations.

3. The items in the Implementation section should all include a responsible department or manager, and also an associated date for initial completion (some items are ongoing or to be maintained).

4. In the Performance Measures and Reporting section, the metrics don't convey the actual changes in facilities from year to year. We suggest that for each measure, delete the word "Change". For example, the "Total miles of new bike lanes" is sufficient to measure progress, and a chart or graph of prior years can identify trends.

5. In the Performance Measures and Reporting section, the last item should identify a responsible department or individual, and a date when the annual report will be delivered to City Council and posted online (example: 2 months after end of fiscal year?).